

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3898

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

USMISSION USUN NY

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LUANDA 1035

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS PINT MILI AO

SUBJECT: REFUGEE SITUATION IN ANGOLA

REF: STATE 178525 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY; UP TO 200,000 FORMER REFUGEES HAVE RETURNED TO NOR-
THERN ANGOLA FROM ZAIRE. THE ANGOLAN TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT IS
INCAPABLE OF DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM. THE UNHCR, UNDP AND
INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS ARE HERE, BUT HAVE YET TO ESTABLISH
COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC AND BAPTIST
CHURCHES ARE PROVIDING HELP. THE PROBLEM IS COMPOUNDED BY
THE MPLA BLOCKADE OF ALL ROADS TO THE NORTH. ON JULY 26 I
TRAVELLED THROUGH A REGION WHERE MANY FORMER REFUGEES HAVE
SETTLED. THE UNHCR REP IN ANGOLA BELIEVES THAT A PROPER RELIEF
PROGRAM WILL COST FROM 30,000,000 TO 50,000,000 DOLLARS. END
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SUMMARY.

2. THE REFUGEE PROBLEM IN ANGOLA CAN BE DIVIDED INTO THREE PARTS:
THE BLACK WHO HAVE FLED LUANDA AND OTHER CITIES; REFUGEES

IN ZAIRE WHO HAPQ RETURNED TO NORTHERN ANGOLA; AND WHITES WHO WANT TO RETURN TO PORTUGAL OR GO TO SOME OTHER COUNTRY. WE ARE CONCERNED HERE WITH THE FIRST TWO GROUPS.

3. THE ANGOLAN TRANSITIONAL ROVERNMENT IS INOPERATIVE PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE INTERNCINE WARFARE BETWEEN THE MPLA AND FNLA AND PARTLY BECAUSE THE OFFICIALS IN THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT ARE INCOMPETENT. THE FIGHTING HAS SWELLED THE RANKS OF DISPLACED PERSONS WHO HAVE LEFT LUANDA, THE CENTER OF THE STRUGGLE, AND OTHER URBAN CENTERS. MEANWHILE, THOUSANDS OF BLACKS WHO FLED NORTHERN ANGOLA IN THE EARLY SIXTIES TO ESCAPE PORTUGUESE RE-

TALIAION FOR THE MARCH 15, 1961 UPRISING OF BLACKS ARE RETURNING TO THEIR FORMER LANDS. THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM IS ENORMOUS AND NO ONE HAS YET BEEN ABLE TO COPE WITH IT. THE UNDP IS HERE, AS IS THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE FOR REFUGEES AND THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS. THAT NONE OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS HAS YET GOT A HANDLE ON THE PROBLEM IS NOT DUE SO MUCH TO THEIR INEFFECTIVENESS AS TO THE INABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ACT AND THE INABILITY OF THE AGENCIES TO FUNCTION IN THE FACE OF THE CHAOS THAT HAS ENGULFED THE COUNTRY. TOO, THE INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES HAVE YET FULLY TO REALIZE THE MAGNITUDE OF THE TRAGEDY. I SET FORTH BELOW THE SEVERAL FACETS OF THIS PROBLEM AND THE EFFORTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES AND CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS TO COPE WITH IT.

4. BY MID-JULY, 1975 SOME 150,000 TO 2000,000 ANGOLANS HAD RETURNED FROM ZAIRE. THEY CAME BECAUSE THEY WERE ATTRACTED BY THE THOUGHT OF INDEPENDENCE AND THE PROSPECT OF RETURNING TO THEIR TRADITIONAL LANDS, BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULT ECONOMIC SITUATION IN ZAIRE, THE HOSTILITY OF ZAIRIANS TOWARD SOME OF THEM AND BECAUSE THE PARTY THAT REPRESENTS THEM, THE FNLA, HHAS URGED THEM TO GET BACK HOME IN TIME FOR ELECTIONS IN OCTOBER.

5. ALVOR AGREEMENT THAT SET UP THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT CHARGES THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND A REFUGEE COMMISSION WITH CARING FOR AND RESETTLING RETURNING ANGOLANS. IN FACT, THE COMMISSION CONFIDENTIAL

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REMAINS INOPERATIVE AND THE MINISTER OF HEALTH HAS DONE LITTLE EXCEPT GAIN THE REPUTATION, DESERVEDLY OR NOT, OF A GRAFTER WHO HAS MADE OFF WITH MONEY DESTINED FOR THE REFUGEES. THE ONLY REFUGEE PROGRAMS IN NORTHERN ANGOLA ARE THOSE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF CARMONA, FRANCISCO MATA MOURISCA, AND THE AMERICAN BAPTISTS.

6. ON JULY 26 I ACCOMPANIED THE BISHOP ON A VISIT TO AN AREA IN NORTHERN ANGOLA TO WHICH LARGE NUMBERS OF FORMER REFUGEES IN ZAIRE HAVE RETURNED. BEFORE WE COULD MAKE THE JOURNEY I HAD TO APPEAL TO FNLA ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL DANIEL CHIPENDA FOR A TANK OF GAS FOR THE BISHOP'S CAR, SO SERIOUS IS THE SHORTAGE OF FUEL IN THE REGION. WE TRAVELLED NORH FROM CARMONA TO LUCUNGA

AND THEN TURNED EASTWARD. WE STOPPED SEVERAL TIMES AT SETTLEMENTS ALONG THE WAY TO TALK WITH THE INHABITANTS. THE UNIVERSAL COMPLAINT WAS HUNGER, BUT NO ONE WAS STARVING. THE BISHOP SAID THAT ON SOME DAYS HE ESTIMATES THAT AS MANY AS FORTY CHILDREN AND OLD PEOPLE DIE AS A RESULT OF ILLNESSES AND AFFLICTIONS COMPLICATED BY THE POOR DIET. TO MY KNOWLEDGE THE BISHOP HAS NEVER SAID THAT 40-50 "PEOPLE" ARE DYING EVERY DAY, ALTHOUGH I UNDERSTAND BAPTIST MISSIONARIES AND JOURNALISTS ARE USING THESE FIGURES.

7. I HAVE TRIED TO TRACK DOWN THE ORIGINS OF THE "FORTY PEOPLE A BAYBYING" AND I BELIEVE IT CAN BE TRACED TO A BAPTIST MINISTER IN NORTHERN ANGOLA, WHO TOLD THE HEAD OF THE BAPTIST MISSION ORGANIZATION IN ANGOLA, HARRISON PIKE, THAT DURING A RECENT MEASLES EPIDEMIC IN HIS PARISH FORTY CHILDREN DIED WITHIN A FEW DAYS OF SUCH COMPLICATIONS AS PNEUMONIA CAUSED BY THE WEAKENED CONDITION INDUCED BY DEFICIENT DIET. IT IS NOT MY INTENTION HERE TO DENY THE MAGNITUDE OF THE TRAGEDY; IT IS SERIOUS IN THE EXTREME. I DO WANT TO MAKE SURE, HOWEVER, THAT POTENTIAL AID DONORS DO NOT INDUCE IN THEMSELVES A CATATONIC STATE THAT WILL COMPOUND THE CHAOS. WHATEVER IS DONE IN THE NAME OF INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY MEASURES MUST BE COORDINATED THROUGH SOME EXPERIENCED AGENCY, PREFERABLY THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES. THE CRUCIAL FACTORS ARE THE CONTINUING INFLUX OF RETURNEES AND THE MPLA ROAD BLOCKADE. THE LONGER THE NORTH IS CUT OFF THE GREATER BECOMES THE NEED, A NEED THAT CAN ONLY BE INADEQUATELY COMPENSATED BY THE PASSAGE OF TIME THAT WILL SEE THE MATURATION OF CROPS;

THE DEFICIENT AGRICULTURAL TECHNIQUES OF THE PEASANTS DO NOT
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PERMIT THEM TO SUBSIST AT MORE THAN A MARGINAL LEVEL WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF SOME OUTSIDE AGENCY. THE FNLA IS A BUREAUCRATIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE BASKET CASE AND THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT IS MORIBUND AND NEITHER ORGANIZATION SHOULD BE COUNTED UPON TO DO ANYTHING.

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O R 311310Z JUL 75
FM AMCONSUL LUANDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3899
INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LISBON
USMISSION USUN NY
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LUANDA 1035

8. THE MPLA CONTROL OF THE HIG WASS FROM LUANDA AND THE SOUTH HAS PARALYZED THE NORTH; THE ALTERNATE SUPPLY, ZAIRE, HAS BEEN ABLE TO SUPPLY BUT A TRICKLE OF GOODS AND FOOD, AND THE LITTLE THAT COMES DOWN GOES MOSTLY TO THE FNLA. THE BISHOP HAS SUPPORT FROM CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES IN THE U.S. AND FROM MISERIOR IN GERMANY, AS WELL AS OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, BUT HE IS STYMIED AT THE MOMENT BY LACK OF FUEL FOR HIS TRUCKS AND LACK OF FOOD TO SEND UP EVEN IF HE HAD THE FUEL. THE NORTH IS DEPENDENT UPON THE SOUTH FOR FOOD AND UPON LUANDA FOR INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS.

9. THE RETURNEES HAVE LITTLE TROUBLE SORTING THEMSELVES OUT ON THEIR ARRIVAL. THEY KNOW WHERE THEIR LANDS ARE AND BY AND LARGE NO ONE HAS CULTIVATED THEM DURING THE FOURTEEN YEARS THEY HAVE BEEN ABSENT. IN THOSE CASES WHERE WHITES HAVE TAKEN OVER THEIR COFFEE PATCHES, THE LANDS ARE RESTORED TO THEIR FORMER OWNERS
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WITHOUT QUESTION. IN SOME CASES THE RETURNEES FIND THAT WHITES HAVE INCREASED THE NUMBER OF COFFEE PLANTS. OCCASIONALLY A DISPUTE ARISES BECAUSE A WHITE HAS PURCHASED A COFFEE FARM FROM ANOTHER WHITE WHO HAS THROWN IN THE ACREAGE HE PICKED UP AFTER THE BLACKS FLED. THE BAKONGO DO NOT LIKE TO HIRE OUT AS CONTRACT LABOR ON COFFEE FARMS BECAUSE THEY PREFER TO WORK FOR THEMSELVES AND BECAUSE THEY FEAR THAT IF THEY DO NOT PLANT THEIR LANBS THEY WILL LOSE THEM TO OTHERS. STILL, THOSE WHO HAVE RESETTLED NEAR COFFEE FARMS WORK BY THE DAY AND GET PAID BY THE SACK - THIRTY ESCUDOS A SACK (AT THE OFFICIAL RATE OF EXCHANGE, APPROXIMATELY 25 ESCUDOS EQUALS ONE U.S. DOLLAR). THE AVERAGE WORKER CAN FILL TWO SACKS A DAY. THE MOST THAT A MAN CAN DO IS THREE SACKS AND THAT NOT REGULARLY.

10. AS SOON AS THE RETURNEES ARRIVE AT THEIR OLD SITES THEY BEGIN TO PUT UP THEIR WATTLE AND DAUB HUTS WITH THATCH ROOFS, WHICH TAKE BUT A FEW DAYS TO COMPLETE. THE ROADS ARE FILLED WITH PEOPLE CARRYING SAPLINGS. THE HEAD MAN (SOBA) PARCELS OUT THE COMMUNAL FARMLANDS AND WORK BEGINS IMMEDIATELY ON TILLING AND PLANTING. SOME OF THE SETTLEMENTS HAVE GOOD BOTTOMLAND CLOSE BY,

WHILE OTHERS MUST TRUDGE SEVERAL MILES TO THEIR PLOTS. SEED PS IN SHORT SUPPLY SO THAT A NUMBER OF SETTLEMENTS STILL HAVE NOT PLANTED ENOUGH TO MEET FUTURE NEEDS. I SAW THE BISHOP'S TRACTOR LYING IDLE IN A FIELD FOR LACK OF FUEL.

11. THE STAPLES MOST IN EVIDENCE ARE PEANUTS, MANDIOCA, AND BEANS. THE EARLIEST RETURNEES IN THE AREA I VISITED CAME IN APRIL, AND SOME ARE NOW HARVESTING. MANDIOCA TAKES UP TO SIX MONTHS TO MATURE, BUT THE SETTLERS WILL HARVEST IT SOONER AND ALSO EAT THE GREENS WHEN IN NEED. THOSE WHO CAME MORE RECENTLY MUST DEPEND ON FAMILY, MEAGER SAVINGS THEY BROUGHT WITH THEM OR OCCASIONAL WORK. FEW ANIMALS OTHER THAN CHICKENS WERE IN EVIDENCE.

12. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE PEOPLE ARE IN A BAD WAY AND THAT A LARGE RELIEF EFFORT IS NEEDED. THE BISHOP ESTIMATES THERE ARE NOW 200,000 RETURNEES IN NORTHERN ANGOLA AND THAT THEY WILL NEED ONE MEAL A DAY FOR FIVE MONTHS AT A COST OF FIVE ESCUDOS A MEAL. HENCE, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT 6,000,000 DOLLAR MINIMUM PROGRAM. THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES IN ANGOLA ESTIMATES THAT A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM FOR ANGOLA, ONE THAT ATTACKS SUCH PROBLEMS AS HOUSING, CONFIDENTIAL

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SCHOOLS, PENETRATION ROADS, WILL COST FROM 30,000,000 TO 50,000,000 DOLLARS. THE RELIEF PROGRAMS FOR MOZAMBIQUE AND GUINEA BISSAU AMOUNTED TO 7,000,000 DOLLARS AND 4,000,000 DOLLARS RESPECTIVELY AND THE UNHCR APPARENTLY IS NOT YET READY TO THINK IN THE LARGER TERMS REQUIRED BY THE SCOPE OF THE ANGOLAN PROBLEM. THE UNCHR REP HAS JUST FLOWN TO GENEVA FOR CONSULTATIONS ON THIS QUESTION. THE NUMBERS OF PERSONS NEEDING HELP IS NOT KNOWN THREE WEEKS AGO THE BISHOP OF CARMONA TALKED TO ME IN TERMS OF 150,000. DURING MY VISIT TO THE REGION HE USED THE FIGURE OF 200,000. THE POTENTIAL IS ABOUT 500,800, BUT MANY REFUGEES STILL IN ZAIRE ARE HESITANT TO COME DOWN AS WORD HAS FILTERED BACK OF THE DIFFICULTIES THE RETURNEES HAVE ENCOUNTERED. MORE WILL COME, THAT IS CERTAIN, BECAUSE OF THE FACTORS I MENTION IN PARA 4 ABOVE. IN ADDITION, WE MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THOSE BLACKS WHO HAVE FLED NORTH AND SOUTH FROM LUANDA. WE HAVE NO ACCURATE ESTIMATES OF THEIR NUMBERS, BUT 5,000 HAVE GONE BY SEA TO THE SOUTH AND AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER HEADED HOME BY ROAD. THE BAKONGO WHO FLED NORTH FROM LUANDA ARE MORE NUMEROUS. THE PORTUGUESE MILITARY, WHO HAVE WORKED ALMOST ALONE TO GET THE BAKONGO TO THEM. MGTHJM ESTIMATE THAT 15,000 PERSONS HAVE LEFT BY SEA AND ANOTHER 2,000 BY AIR TO CARMONA.

13. IN LUANDA TWO SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES, THE PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES AND THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS MAINTAIN TWENTY FEEDING CENTERS. THE AGENCIES, THE LABOR AND WELFARE BOARD (JASTA) AND THE SOCIAL ACTION INSTITUTE (IASA), DIVIDE THE WORK. FOOD IS RECEIVED AND PREPARED IN JASTA KITCHENS AND DISTRIBUTED TO IASA AND LIBERATION MOVEMENT FEEDING

CENTERS. ON JULY 25, 1&000 PERSONS WERE REGISTERED AT THE CENTERS. BY JULY 27, AFTER MANY HAD BEEN SHIPPED OUT, THE NUMBER DROPPED TO 7,000, BUT ROSE AGAIN ON JULY 29 TO 9,000 AS MORE BLACKS CAME TO THE INNER CITY. THE UNDP HAS BEEN HERE FOR SEVERAL WEEKS, BUT IN THE FACE OF AN INOPERATIVE AND INCOMPETENT GOVERNMENT HAS DEEN UNABLE TO DO ANYTHING ON THE DEVELOPMENTAL SIDE. IN ORDER TO MAKE HIMSELF USEFUL THE UNDP REP HAS ARRANGED, AFTER WEEKS OF BUREAUCRATIC BATTLE TO HAVE THE SWISSAIR REFUGEE FLIGHTS FOR WHITES BRING DOWN MILK, CANNED FISH AND COOKING OIL FROM GENEVA FOR THE FEEDING CENTERS. HE RECEIVED THE FIRST SHIPMENT OF FIFTEEN TONS ON JULY 27 AND ANOTHER NINE TONS ON JULY 29. TAP IS ALSO FLYING
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FOOD DOWN FROM LISBON FOR THE CENTERS DONATED BY THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT.

14. ON JULY 29 THE UNHCR REP PRESENTED HIS PROPOSALS TO THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT. IN ESSENCE, HE PROPOSED THAT THE UNHCR BE GIVEN COMPLETE AUTHORITY TO RUN ANY EMERGENCY PROGRAM AGREED TO. I BELIEVE THAT THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO MOVE SUPPLIES AND MAKE SURE THEY ARE PROPERLY DISTRIBUTED. TO UTILIZE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES WOULD ENSURE THE COLLAPSE OF THE PROGRAM BEFORE IT GOT STARTED. THE UNHCR PROPOSAL ENVISAGES THE USE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND BAPTIST MISSIONS AS DISTRIDUTING AGENCIES. THE MOST SERIOUS IMMEDIATE PROBLEM IS HOW TO MOVE THE SUPPLIES NORTH PAST MPLA FORCES. IF THEY REFUSE PASSAGE O UN VEHICLES, THE ONLY ALTERNATIVES ARE AN AIRLIFT OR STAGING OUT OF ZAIRE. AT THE MOMENT, THE BAPTISTS HAVE TWELVE TONS OF FOOD THEY PLAN TO MOVE TO AMBRIZETE AND AMBRIZ BY AIR ON AUGUST 2. THEY ARE CONSIDERING BUYING A DC-3 IN KENYA FOR 5,000 TO 10,000 DOLLARS. IF ALL SUPPLIES ARE TO BE AIRLIFTED BY ALL DONORS SEVERAL PLANES WILL BE NEEDED.

15. FOR DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE PLANS OF CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES, WASHINGTON AGENCIES SHOULD CALL ARMANDO E. SONAGGERE, WHO WAS JUST HERE AND TOURED THE AFFECTED REGIONS. HIS ADDRESS IS 1011 FIRST AVENUE, NEW YORK AND HIS TELEPHONE NUMBER IS 212-838-4700.
KILLORAN

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